CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for detecting the presence of a wireless LAN comprising:

a radio frequency receiver for receiving radio frequency signals; and

a controller associated with the radio frequency receiver having programming for measuring and analyzing the energy of the received radio frequency signals for the purpose of determining if the radio frequency signals indicate the presence of a beacon issuing from a wireless LAN access point or are being produced by a noise generating electronic device.

2. The apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the programming determines if the received radio frequency signals includes pulses having a duration within an established minimum and maximum.

3. The apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the programming determines if the received radio frequency signal includes pulses having a periodicity appropriate for a beacon issuing from a wireless LAN access point.

4. The apparatus as recited in claim 2, wherein the programming determines if the received radio frequency signal includes pulses having a periodicity appropriate for a beacon issuing from a wireless LAN access point.

5. The apparatus as recited in claim 4, wherein the periodicity is approximately 100 ms.

6. The apparatus as recited in claim 1, further comprising a display associated with the controller for displaying an indication of the presence of a beacon issuing from a wireless LAN access point.

7. The apparatus as recited in claim 6, wherein the display comprises a plurality of LEDs.

8. The apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the radio frequency receiver and the controller are contained within a handheld unit.

9. A method for detecting the presence of a wireless LAN, comprising:

receiving radio frequency signals;

determining if the received radio frequency signals includes pulses having a duration and periodicity appropriate for a beacon issuing from a wireless LAN access point; and

if the determination is positive, indicating the presence of a wireless LAN.

10. The method as recited in claim 9, comprising the step of illuminating one or more LEDs to indicate the presence of a wireless LAN.

11. In a handheld device, a readable media having instructions for detecting the presence of a wireless LAN, the instructions performing steps comprising:

receiving radio frequency signals;

determining if the received radio frequency signals includes pulses have a duration and periodicity appropriate for a beacon issuing from a wireless LAN access point; and

if the determination is positive, indicating the presence of a wireless LAN.

12. The readable media as recited in claim 11, wherein the instructions perform the step of illuminating one or more LEDs to indicate the presence of a wireless LAN.